

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Comments on the Recent Appointments of Marshal Zhukov and Malenkov	DATE DISTR.	15 February 1955
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This is UNEVALUATED Information

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

1. [] the appointment of Marshal Zhukov to the post of Minister of Defense was made for the following reasons: 25X1
 - a. Marshal Zhukov is the most popular high-ranking Soviet Army officer, both within the military and with the population in general. 25X1
 - b. Zhukov is the most professionally competent high-ranking Soviet officer. This indicates [] there is an increased emphasis on preparation for war. 25X1
2. [] the appointment of Zhukov, with his great popularity, would not have been made except for the necessity imposed by Paragraph 1 (b) above, and the balancing factor that Khrushchev, at the present time, apparently feels that he has sufficient power to be able to control Zhukov. [] 25X1
 [] political control of the military would be exercised by the long-established system of political officers in the Army, answerable to the Party. Political officers still play a powerful role in the Party control of the Army. [] this control will still be exercised by Khrushchev through Bulganin. 25X1
3. [] additional political control has been established over Zhukov by his inclusion in the Central Committee of the Party. [] 25X1
 [] this was done shortly after the death of Stalin. [] this inclusion would serve to ally Zhukov more with the political than with the military elements. 25X1
4. Another factor which probably gave Khrushchev confidence in his ability to control any possibly dissident elements was the recent elevation of the chairmanship of the Committee of State Security to ministerial level. Khrushchev and Serov, the present chairman of the KGB, have a long history of a

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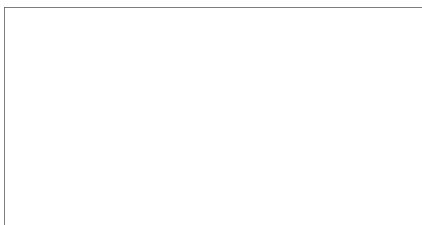
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25X1

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friendly working relationship.

5. [] never in history has the Soviet military been instrumental in formulating or influencing national policy, and any tendency on the part of the West to consider the Soviet military as a political factor is unfounded. 25X1
6. [] the assignment of Malenkov, following his resignation as Premier, to the post of Deputy Premier of the USSR and Minister of Electric Power Stations, was calculated to dispel any thought that his resignation was brought about through a struggle for power among Soviet leaders, but was nothing more than an administrative reassignment. This maneuver has historical precedent. For example, Trotsky was assigned to the same Ministry of Electric Power Stations (sic) as the first step in his downfall, and Yezhov was assigned as Commissar of Communications under similar circumstances. 25X1



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